



William F. Martin
Mayor

City of GREENFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS

PLANNING BOARD

City Hall • 14 Court Square • Greenfield, MA 01301
Phone 413-772-1549 • Fax 413-772-1309
eric.twarog@greenfield-ma.gov • www.greenfield-ma.gov

Members:

Twarog, Eric
Director, Planning & Dev.

Allen, Jim (2022)
Desorgher, Virginia (2022)
McMahan, Amy (2021)
Pottern, Jamie (2021)
Roberts, Charles (2020)
Touloumtzis, George (2021)

GREENFIELD PLANNING BOARD Minutes of October 17, 2019

**John Zon Community Center
35 Pleasant Street, Greenfield**

The meeting was called to order by the Planning Board Chairperson at 7:02 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Charles Roberts, Chair; Virginia Desorgher, Vice-chair; Jamie Pottern, Clerk; Jim Allen; and Alternate Amy McMahan

ABSENT: George Touloumtzis

Approval of Minutes:

MOTION: Moved by Touloumtzis, seconded by Pottern, and voted 4:0:1 (Touloumtzis abstained) to approve the meeting minutes of September 5, 2019.

ZBA Recommendations:

- a. Application of Maggie and Mathew Guertin for property located at 375 Leyden Road (Assessor's Tax Map R22, Lot 15) for a special permit pursuant to Sections 200-4.7(C7), 200-8.3, and 200-8.4 of the Zoning Ordinance in order to allow the installation of a 10.72 kW (2) Pole mounted solar PV system at this location.

John Ward and Claire Chang of the Solar Store presented the project to the Board. The Board had no issues with this request.

MOTION: Moved by Desorgher, seconded by Pottern, and voted 5:0:0 to forward a positive recommendation to the ZBA on the application of Maggie and Mathew Guertin for property located at 375 Leyden Road (Assessor's Tax Map R22, Lot 15) for a special permit pursuant to Sections 200-4.7(C7), 200-8.3, and 200-8.4 of the Zoning Ordinance in order to allow the installation of a 10.72 kW (2) Pole mounted solar PV system at this location.

John Ward and Claire Chang requested that the Planning Board review requirements for a special permit for residential-scale solar projects to include tracker systems. They stated that Greenfield's regulations for such systems are prohibitive as the permitting process sets the project back up to 3 months. They also stated that if the solar array was on a shed, a special permit would not be required. Roberts stated that it was important to preserve the neighbor's rights to request screening, etc. He



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stated that sheds are less offensive to many people. Desorgher stated that a review of the requirements is a good idea. Pottern suggested that the Solar Store forward to the Department of Planning and Development bylaw/ordinance examples from other communities in Massachusetts that are more expedient of the review process for review and consideration for an amendment.

- b. Application of Bruce Thomas for property located at 68 Cheapside Street (Assessor's Tax Map 8, Lot 9) for a special permit pursuant to Sections 200-6.2(E) and 200-8.3 of the Zoning Ordinance in order to allow the installation of 100 feet of a six (6) foot high vinyl privacy fence along a portion of the front property line at this location.

Mr. Thomas presented the project to the Board. He would like to install a six (6) foot fence along the front property line for noise control and screening purposes. 40 willow trees have been mowed down by beavers over the years. There are no abutters on that side of the property except for railroad property and WTE Recycling.

MOTION: Moved by Desorgher, seconded by Allen, and voted 5:0:0 to forward a positive recommendation to the ZBA on the application of Bruce Thomas for property located at 68 Cheapside Street (Assessor's Tax Map 8, Lot 9) for a special permit pursuant to Sections 200-6.2(E) and 200-8.3 of the Zoning Ordinance in order to allow the installation of 100 feet of a six (6) foot high vinyl privacy fence along a portion of the front property line at this location.

Discussion Items:

- a. Potential Amendments to the Use Schedule relative to Residential Uses/ Accessory Dwelling Unit Ordinance.

Desorgher stated that there is a current push from the City Council and the Affordable Housing Committee to allow Accessory Dwelling Units and 3-family units by right. There is also a push to reduce off-street parking requirements and to amend the current definition of "family" to include anybody. Roberts stated that Councilors Dolan and Wheeler will be at the November 7, 2019 meeting of the Board to present their thoughts on zoning changes. He stated that the Board should get builders and developers involved in the conversation. Pottern stated that inclusionary zoning is about affordable housing in new housing developments and that Massachusetts is doing well in this regard. Is the Board talking about doing more than this? Desorgher stated that it's a bargaining tool to get developers to build more affordable housing. Roberts suggested creating incentives in Greenfield for developers to provide affordable housing units. He stated that MJ Adams would be a good resource as she is experienced in affordable housing issues. McMahan stated that her two-family on 0.08 acres with four parking spaces makes it now unbuildable for increasing density. Roberts stated that it could be worth loosening dimensional requirements to increase density. Desorgher stated that there could have been more building at Silver Crest but for the heavy frontage requirements. Roberts stated that the parking and building height requirements could be amended. Pottern stated that they need to



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invite conversations on this topic to get different perspectives. What logical things could the Board tweak in the ordinance? Roberts stated that the Affordable Housing Committee has already done a lot of work on this and will be presenting their findings to the City Council. Could that be used to kick start a public discussion? Desorgher suggested reducing lot sizes, allowing multi-family by right, and reducing parking requirements. She stated that it is typically the vocal minority that engages in the public process. The less well-off one is, the less likely one is to go to public meetings. Pottern stated that in anticipation of proposing zoning amendments, it would be nice to hear from stakeholders. Roberts responded that it would have to be a public meeting. Pottern clarified that this would be a precursor to actual amendments, it is a way to get experts to throw ideas out there so that the Board could then make informed choices. Roberts inquired if the Board could do this as a grass roots effort. Pottern inquired if the FRCOG could help as well as other non-profits. Desorgher clarified that the FRCOG and others have all come to meetings of the Affordable Housing Committee. She stated that it is difficult. Roberts stated that he was disappointed in the ADU process last time; it seemed that there may have been a misinterpretation of the subdivision control law and regulations. Allen stated that the Planning Board should wait until the new mayor is elected. Roberts stated that the Board should try to get this done now. Pottern stated that the challenge is public perception and how this gets presented. What's different from the last time? It is in the 2014 Sustainable Master Plan and it is coming from the Affordable Housing Committee. Desorgher stated that any inclusionary zoning ordinance should make it easy for developers. She stated that if you are a felon, you cannot get federal Section 8 Housing Vouchers. There are other barriers to housing as well. She stated that there are 100-200 vacant homes in Greenfield. The City should give away houses, forgive taxes, and zone for ease of re-use. Pottern inquired if these are really funding needs, not zoning issues. Desorgher stated that Smith College made a deal with the City of Northampton to deal with homeless students. She stated that 12% of GCC students are homeless. Roberts stated that they should build a dormitory for the students.

Adjournment:

MOTION: Moved by Pottern, seconded by Allen and voted 5:0:0 to adjourn the Planning Board meeting at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Eric Twarog, AICP
Director of Planning and Development